2. The method of claim 1, wherein the nucleoside or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the nucleoside or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, is a purine nucleoside.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein the β-D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside or a phosphate thereof, or a phannaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof is administered in combination or alternation with a second anti-hepatitis C agent.

5. The method of claim 4, wherein the second agent is selected from the group consisting of an interferon, ribavirin, a protease inhibitor, a thaizolidine derivative, a polymerase inhibitor, and a helicase inhibitor.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the second agent is an interferon.

7. The method of claim 5, wherein the second agent is an ribavirin.

8. The method of claim 1, wherein the β-D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester is in the form of a dosage unit.

9. The method of claim 8, wherein the dosage unit contains 50 to 1000 mg.

10. The method of claim 8, wherein the dosage unit is a tablet or capsule.

11. The method of claim 1, wherein the βD-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside or phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, is in substantially pure form.

12. The method of claim 11, wherein the βD-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside or phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof is at least 90% by weight of the β-D-isomer.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the βD-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside or phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof is at least 95% by weight of the βD-isomer.

14. The method of claim 1, wherein the βD-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered.

15. The method of claim 1, wherein the βD-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered in the form of a pharmaceutically acceptable salt.

16. The method of claim 1, wherein the βD-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered in the form of a pharmaceutically acceptable ester.

17. The method of claim 14, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

18. The method of claim 15, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

19. The method of claim 16, wherein the nucleoside is a pyrimidine nucleoside.

20. The method of claim 14, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

21. The method of claim 15, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

22. The method of claim 16, wherein the nucleoside is a purine nucleoside.

23. The method of claim 1, wherein a phosphate, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, of the β-D-2'-methyl-ribofuranosyl nucleoside is administered.

24. The method of claim 2, wherein the pyrimidine nucleoside or phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, is a cytidine nucleoside.

25. The method of claim 3, wherein the purine nucleoside or phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, is a guanosine nucleoside.

26. The method of claim 24, wherein a phosphate, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, of the cytidine nucleoside is administered.

27. The method of claim 25, wherein a phosphate, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, of the guanosine nucleoside is administered.

28. The method of claim 1, wherein the nucleoside or phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof, is administered to a host.

29. The method of claim 28, wherein the host is a human.

30. A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising contacting a hepatitis C virus in the host with a compound of claim 1 or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

31. A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising contacting a cell in the host infected with a hepatitis C virus with a compound of claim 1 or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

32. A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising contacting a hepatitis C virus in the host with a compound of claim 24 or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

33. A method for the treatment of a hepatitis C virus infection in a host, comprising contacting a cell in the host infected with a hepatitis C virus with a compound of claim 25 or a phosphate thereof, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt or ester thereof.

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